

question of providing suitable accommodation at economical rates for the scholars coming from outside Delhi and wanting to work in the National Archives of India and Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi was held on 1st December, 1975. The "Group" felt that the Sapru House Hostel offered the best available accommodation, particularly in view of the central location and reasonable rates of rent. Five research scholars were provided accommodation facilities there during 1975-76 while 12 scholars from various universities availed themselves of the facilities in the Gomti Guest House, New Delhi during 1977-78.

The hostel accommodation at the Kasturba Gandhi Marg, and Western Court, New Delhi is under the control of the Directorate of Estates, Government of India, which could be requested to reserve about a dozen rooms for the use of the scholars working in the Research Room of the National Archives of India. Both the places are located at a distance of about a furlong from the National Archives of India and have boarding facilities as well.

5.2.9.2.5

Transfer of erstwhile Pondicherry Records in the possession of France to the Government of India

Resolution by Prof. G.S. Dikshit

Resolved that the Government of India should approach the Government of France for return of all records transferred by the Government of France from Pondicherry to their country on the eve of the merger of Pondicherry with the Union of India in 1956.

Explanatory Note: On the eve of the merger of Pondicherry with the Union of India in 1956 the Government of France removed all important records of their Pondicherry administration to France, leaving only a few less important ones at Pondicherry. Perhaps, such removal was provided for in the terms and conditions of the merger of the enclave with India. Even if that were so it was in clear violation of archival principles enunciated by the French themselves which clearly rule out such transfer and dispersal. It is possible that considerations of storage space might have weighed with the Government of India in 1956 more than the archival principles or interests of research scholars of this country. With the opening of Records Centre at Pondicherry by the National Archives of India in January 1979, the problem of space has been partially solved. It is now possible to store these records at Pondicherry itself. If the French Government finds some difficulty in returning the originals they should certainly find no difficulty in providing free of cost microfilm copies of these records for the use of Indian Scholars. These records are nearly four centuries old, and form valuable source material for the history of particularly South Indian powers, also for economic history of the whole of India, besides being our rightful cultural heritage. It is noteworthy that neither U.K. nor Portugal the other colonial powers in India, have not deprived us of our records rightfully belonging to us in this manner.

Standing Committee's Views:

The National Archives of India has approached the Government of France through the Embassy of India to supply

the microfilm copies of all records which were taken away by the Government of France from Pondicherry and Chandernagore before these territories were merged with the Indian Union. These records are housed at the Depot des Archives d' Outre Mer, Chemin du Moulin de Testas, les Fenouillères. The Ministry for External Relations of France, after having studied the possibilities for financing the operation, has regretted to abandon the project for lack of sufficient funds.

In view of the above the Government of India may be requested to finance the whole microfilm programme.

5.2.9.2.6

Setting up of a regional records repository of the National Archives of India in the eastern region of India
Resolution by Prof. Hiren Chakraborty:

A regional records repository of the National Archives of India be set up in the eastern region of India to house the non-current records of the various offices, institutions and undertakings of the Government of India in the eastern region.

Explanatory Note: A large number of non-current records is lying scattered in various offices of the central government, its undertakings and autonomous bodies, in eastern India. These records are mostly very old and are in deplorable state of preservation. Institutions and organisations like the Botanical Survey of India, the Geological Survey of India, the Department of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, the Port Authority, the Railways and many other central government offices have their headquarters at Calcutta and in the adjoining areas. The records of these offices by their very nature constitute an important source-material for the socio-economic history of the country. Records accumulated in these offices are generally destroyed at